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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: MASS, VS

SUB: NEW YORK TIMES ARTICLE ON U.S. ROLE IN VIETNAM

REF: STATE 037727, SAIGON 2548

1. AS A PRELIMINARY TO DETAILED DISCUSSION OF SHIPLER NEW YORK TIMES ARTICLE DATED SAIGON FEB. 16, IT IS NECESSARY TO RECORD THAT EMBASSY HAS LONG BEEN AWARE OF DECISIONS TAKEN LAST FALL IN HANOI TO MOUNT ALL-OUT CAMPAIGN THIS WINTER AND SPRING TO PERSUADE THE CONGRESS TO DRASTICALLY REDUCE THE MAGNITUDE OF BOTH ECONOMIC AND MILITARY AID TO THE GOVERNMENT OF VIETNAM.

2. THE STOCKHOLM CONFERENCE WAS TO BE USED AS THE MAIN COORDINATING MECHANISM, AND THE PRG DELEGATION IN PARIS WAS TO BE THE PRINCIPAL CHANNEL USING THE REMNANTS OF THE AMERICAN "PEACE MOVEMENT" TO BRING INFLUENCE TO BEAR ON SELECTIVE SUSCEPTIBLE, BUT INFLUENTIAL, ELEMENTS OF AMERICAN COMMUNICATIONS MEDIA AND, PARTICULARLY, ON SUSCEPTIBLE CONGRESSIONAL STAFFERS. THE TIMING PREFERRED WAS TO BEGIN WITH INSERTION OF AS MUCH MATERIAL AS POSSIBLE IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, HOPEFULLY TO SECURE CONDEMNATION OF THE GVN IN FORMAL REPORTS OF CONGRESSIONAL SUB-COMMITTEES, WHICH COULD THEN BE FOLLOWED UP AND GIVEN WIDE CIRCULATION BY "INVESTIGATIVE REPORTING" WHICH WOULD TEND TO CONFIRM AND IF POSSIBLE TO EXPAND ON THE DISTORTIONS THEY HAD BEEN

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ABLE TO HAVE INSERTED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL SUB-COMMITTEE FORMAL

REPORTS.

3. LOOKING AT THE SHIPLER ARTICLE, PARAGRAPH BY PARAGRAPH, THE US MISSION HAS THE FOLLOWING OBSERVATIONS:

4. PARAS 1-3 -- RAY HARRIS IS A GENERAL ELECTRIC EMPLOYEE AT BIEN HOA AIR BASE. HIS JOB IS CLASSIFIED AS A CLEANER OF PARTS AND EQUIPMENT. SHIPLER'S FIGURE OF 2,800 DAO CIVILIAN CONTRACTORS IS ESSENTIALLY CORRECT. THE CURRENT COUNT IS 2,762, A FIGURE PROVIDED BY DAO. SHIPLER DOES NOT BOTHER TO RECORD AT THIS POINT THAT THE NUMBER HAS BEEN REDUCED WITHIN THE PAST YEAR FROM SOME 5,000. HE DOES, HOWEVER, MENTION A REDUCTION IN PARAGRAPH 37 OF HIS ARTICLE, SAYING INACCURATELY THAT 2,200 HAVE LEFT SINCE JULY. HE DOES NOT RECORD FACT AVAILABLE TO HIM THAT HARRIS IS PART OF A GROUP OF CONTRACT EMPLOYEES WHOSE FUNCTION IS TO TEACH THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE HOW TO SERVICE PROPERLY MILITARY EQUIPMENT TURNED OVER TO THE GVN AS WELL AS MAINTAIN IT UNTIL THE TRAINING PROCESS IS COMPLETED. NOR DOES SHIPLER RECORD THE FACT KNOWN TO HIM THAT CONTRACT PERSONNEL ARE CONTINUOUSLY WITHDRAWN WHEN TRAINING IS FINISHED. THE "PROGRAM OF MILITARY AID "DOES NOT "SET THE COURSE OF THE WAR," AS SHIPLER PUT IT. THE COURSE IS SET BY THE CONTINUOUS AND CONTINUING COMMUNIST BUILDUP AND EFFORTS OF THE RVNAF TO PROTECT THE POPULATION, LAND AND RESOURCES UNDER GVN CONTROL AT TIME OF THE CEASE FIRE FROM ACTUAL MILITARY ATTACKS MOUNTED BY THE OTHER SIDE, WHICH IS NOT MENTIONED IN THE ARTICLE.

5. PARA 4 -- THIS IS A CLASSIC. SHIPLER CATEGORICALLY POSTULATES "SOUTH VIETNAMESE VIOLATIONS" WITHOUT PRESENTING A SHRED OF EVIDENCE, AND ALLEGES AMERICAN MILITARY AID "DIRECTLY SUPPORTS" SUCH VIOLATIONS WHICH THEREBY "BREAKS THE SPIRIT OF THE ACCORDS." HE DOES RELUCTANTLY CONCEDE THAT "WHETHER THE UNITED STATES IS BREAKING THE LETTER OF THE AGREEMENT COULD PROBABLY BE ARGUED EITHER WAY." IT IS QUITE TRUE THAT TO HANOI "THE SPIRIT OF THE ACCORDS" WAS THAT THE AMERICANS WOULD DELIVE SOUTH VIETNAM BOUND HAND AND FOOT INTO THEIR HANDS. FORTUNATELY, ONLY A HANDFUL OF AMERICANS WOULD AGREE WITH THAT INTERPRETATION OF THE "SPIRIT OF THE ACCORDS."

6. PARAS 5 AND 6 -- NO AMERICANS, CONTRACTORS OR GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES, ARE "INTEGRAL PARTS" OF THE RVNAF MILITARY SYSTEM.
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THEY PROVIDE LIMITED AND TEMPORARY TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE ONLY TO HELP THE VIETNAMESE BECOME SELF-SUFFICIENT. TO DESCRIBE "PENTA-GON-BASED GENERALS WHO TOUR AIRFIELDS" AS "INTEGRAL PARTS OF THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE SUPPLY, TRANSPORT AND INTELLIGENCE SYSTEMS" OBVIOUSLY DISTORTS THE MEANING OF THE WORD "INTEGRAL" TO THE BREAKING POINT. AMERICAN GENERALS VISIT NOT ONLY VIETNAM BUT OTHER FRIENDLY NATIONS THROUGHOUT SOUTHEAST ASIA. THEY ALSO OBSERVE THE USE BEING MADE OF MILITARY AID. (END-USE INSPECTION

BY US PERSONNEL IS REQUIRED BY THE SECURITY ASSISTANCE ACT.)
THE TERM "LIAISON MEN" PRESUMABLY REFERS TO DAO'S REGIONAL
LIAISON OFFICERS. IT IS SIMPLY UNTRUE THAT THEY GIVE "ADVICE,"
AS SHIPLER REPORTS, AGAIN WITHOUT PRODUCING THE SLIGHTEST SCRAP
OF EVIDENCE. EVEN IF PERMISSIBLE, NONE OF THE RLOS IS QUALIFIED.
THEY ARE CIVILIANS WHO, IF THEY HAD PREVIOUS MILITARY EXPERIENCE,
WERE ENLISTED MEN OR JUNIOR OFFICERS WITH LITTLE OR NO BATTLE
MANAGEMENT TRAINING. IT IS UNLIKELY THAT ARVN OFFICERS WOULD
HEED THEIR ADVICE EVEN IF THEY OFFERED IT. AND IT IS SIMPLY A
FALSEHOOD THAT THE CIA GIVES ANY "ADVICE" TO THE NATIONAL POLICE.

7. PARAS 7 AND 8 -- TOTAL BUDGET COST OF MILITARY AID TO THE GVN
IN FY-74 IS 1059.2 MILLION. OF THE PROPOSED 390.8 MILLION INCREASE,
IT IS UNDERSTOOD THAT ABOUT ONE-THIRD IS ATTRIBUTABLE TO AMMUNITION.
AMMUNITION IS EXPENDED AT A RATE OF 20 TO 50 PERCENT LESS THAN
DURING THE LAST YEAR OF THE WAR, DUE TO US-IMPOSED CONSTRAINTS
AND RVNAF SELF-IMPOSED MANAGEMENT CONTROLS. THE US DOES
NOT "DUMP MILLIONS IN CASH INTO THE SAIGON GOVERNMENT'S DEFENSE
BUDGET." THE US PUTS GOODS INTO THE ECONOMY WHICH ARE SOLD FOR
PIASTERS AND THEN ASSIGNED FMR SUPPORT OF MUTUALLY AGREED PROGRAMS.

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8. PARA 9 -- THIS PARAGRAPH IS ANOTHER CLASSIC EXAMPLE OF
DISGUIISING PROPAGANDA UNDER THE PROTECTIVE RUBRIC OF "INVESTIGA-
TIVE REPORTING." SHIPLER NOW ALLEGES THAT U.S. MILITARY AID IS
INDISPENSABLE TO WHAT IS CATEGORICALLY DESCRIBED AS "THE SOUTH
VIETNAMESE GOVERNMENT'S POLICY OF RESISTANCE TO ANY ACCOMMODA-

TION WITH THE COMMUNISTS." THE IMPLICATION IS GLARINGLY OBVIOUS, ALTHOUGH UNSTATED, THAT THE GVN SHOULD DO SO. BEYOND DOUBT, THAT IS HANOI'S POSITION. IN THE NEXT SENTENCE, SHIPLER STATES THAT "MILITARILY, THE EXTENSIVE AID HAS ENABLED PRESIDENT NGUYEN VAN THIEU TO TAKE THE OFFENSIVE AT TIMES, LAUNCHING INTENSIVE ATTACKS WITH ARTILLERY AND JET FIGHTERS AGAINST VIET CONG HELD TERRITORY." SHIPLER DOES NOT THINK IT IMPORTANT TO INFORM THE READERS OF HIS PAPER THAT THE "AT TIMES" IN THE ABOVE SENTENCE WERE RETALIATORY STRIKES SUCH AS THE ONES MADE AFTER THE COMMUNISTS SHELLED THE BIEN HOA AIR BASE AND LATER DESTROYED THE NHA BE PETROLEUM STORAGE TANKS, AND THAT THE GVN HAS A PUBLICLY ANNOUNCED POLICY OF TAKING RETALIATORY ACTION WHENEVER THE NVA/VC FORCES SO ATTACK GVN INSTALLATIONS. SINCE THERE IS NO MENTION OF THE THOUSANDS OF NVA/VC VIOLATIONS OF THE CEASE FIRE, THE ONLY LOGICAL ASSUMPTION IS THAT SHIPLER CONSIDERS IT A VIOLATION OF THE PARIS AGREEMENT ONLY WHEN THE GVN RESPONDS TO THESE ATTACKS.

9. PARAS 10 AND 11 -- IN THESE PARAGRAPHS, THE BIAS OF THE ARTICLE BECOMES GROSSLY OBVIOUS. SHIPLER CONTENDS THAT AMERICAN AID PERMITS PRESIDENT THIEU "TO FORESTALL A POLITICAL SETTLEMENT", UNCLASSIFIED

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STATING THAT HE HAS "REJECTED THE PARIS AGREEMENT'S PROVISION FOR GENERAL ELECTIONS, IN WHICH THE COMMUNISTS WOULD BE GIVEN ACCESS TO THE PRESS, PERMISSION TO RUN CANDIDATES AND FREEDOM TO RALLY SUPPORT OPENLY AND WITHOUT INTERFERENCE FROM THE POLICE. MR. THIEU HAS OFFERED THE ELECTIONS
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OE REVERSAL OF THE FACTS. THE PARIS
AGREEMENT CALLED FOR A CEASE FIRE. THEN WAS TRMMOME THE DELINEATION OF THE AREAS OF CONTROL, THE FORMATION OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF RECONCILIATION AND CONCORD WHICH WOULD PREPARE FOR ELECTIONS UNDER INTERNATIONALLY SUPERVISED CONTROL. THE LAST THING THE NVA/VC FORCES WOULD EVER ACCEPT IS THE HOLDING OF ELECTIONS, FOR UNDER TRUE, IMPARTIAL INTERNATIONAL CONTROLS THEY COULD NOT POSSIBLY RECEIVE MORE THAN TEN PERCENT OF THE VOTE. SO THEY HAVE NEVER OBSERVED THE CEASE FIRE. THEY HAVE NEVER PERMITTED THE BEGINNING OF EVEN DISCUSSION OF THE DELINEATION OF THE " AREAS OF CONTROL", BOTH OF WHICH ARE NECESSARY PRELIMINARIES TO FORMATION OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF RECONCILIATION AND CONCORD, WHICH WAS TO PREPARE FOR THE ELECTIONS. THEIR TACTIC HAS BEEN TO INISIST ON THE ITEMS ENUMERATED BY SHIPLER -- PARTICULARLY ACCESS TO THE PRESS. PRESIDENT THIEU HAS NEVER J

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REPEATEDLY PROPOSED DEFINITE DATES FOR ELECTIONS. IF THE NVA/VC FORCES WILL ACCEPT DEFINITELY A SPECIFIC DATE AND INTERNATIONAL SUPERVISION, ELECTIONS COULD BE AGREED UPON IMMEDIATELY WITH ALL THE FREEDOMS COVERED IN THE PARIS AGREEMENT. ALTHOUGH THESE ARE THE FACTS, SHIPLER IMPLIES THAT IT IS THE REVERSE OF THESE FACTS WHICH EXCUSE THE NVA/VC ATTACKS THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY "MOSTLY WITH ARTILLERY AND ROCKET ATTACKS." SHIPLER DOES NOT THINK THE READERS OF THE NEW YORK TIMES WOULD BE INTERESTED IN THE FACT THAT THESE NVA/VC ARTILLERY AND ROCKET ATTACKS OFTEN HAVE THE POPULACE--CHILDREN AND UNARMED CIVILIANS-- AS THEIR MAIN TARGETS.

10. PARA 12-- SHIPLER IMPLIES SKEPTICISM WHEN HE REPORTS THAT
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"US INTELLIGENCE OFFICIALS CONTEND THAT.....THE NORTH VIETNAMESE HAVE SENT THOUSANDS OF TANKS AND ARTILLERY PIECES SOUTH IN VIOLATION OF THE PARIS AGREEMENTS." BEST INTELLIGENCE ESTIMATES INDICATE THAT SINCE THE CEASEFIRE, NORTH VIETNAM HAS SENT INTO SOUTH VIETNAM AT LEAST 450 TANKS AND ABOUT 265 122 MM GUNS, ACCORDING TO DAO FIGURES. (THE GVN OFTEN CHARGES THAT NORTH VIETNAM HAS SENT 600 TANKS AND ARMORED VEHICLES SOUTH SINCE THE CEASE FIRE.) SHIPLER'S USE OF THE WORD "THOUSANDS" GIVES THE INTENDED IMPRESSION THAT THE US HAS EXAGGERATED THE INFILTRATION OF NVA WEAPONRY. SHIPLER FOLLOWS USE OF THE WORD "CONTENDS" WITH A FURTHER ATTACK ON CREDIBILITY OF THE EXTENT OF MILITARY BUILDUP BY POWERFUL NVA/VC FORCES BY POINTING OUT THAT "COMMUNISTS APPEAR MORE FRUGAL IN BATTLE WITH AMMUNITION...."

11. PARA 13-- MILITARY EXPERTS BELIEVE THAT ANY RESTRAINT ON NVA AMMUNITION EXPENDITURE IS A MATTER OF TACTICS RATHER THAN REAL OR EXPECTED SHORTAGES. THE FACT REMAINS THAT THE NVA HAS ENOUGH AMMO IN THE SOUTH TO SUPPORT A COUNTRY-WIDE OFFENSIVE AT THE 1972 LEVEL FOR AT LEAST ONE YEAR. ANOTHER FACTOR WHICH SHIPLER CONVENIENTLY IGNORES IS THAT ARVN POSITIONS ARE FIXED TO DEFEND BASES AND POPULATED AREAS. THEIR LOCATION IS KNOWN TO THE ENEMY. THEREFORE, FEW ROUNDS ARE NEEDED FOR EFFECTIVE FIRE. THE ENEMY STILL HITS AND RUNS
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13. PARAS 17-19 -- THE IMPLICATION IN THESE PARAGRAPHS IS THAT THE VIETNAMESE ARE NOT SERIOUS ABOUT LEARNING OR ARE INCAPABLE OF LEARNING. NEITHER IMPLICATION IS TRUE. ACCORDING TO THE AMERICAN MANAGER, APPROXIMATELY 200 VIETNAMESE WERE NORMALLY ASSIGNED FOR DUTY ON THE DAY SHIPLER VISITED THE SHOP. IT SHOULD BE NOTED THAT SHIPLER ARRIVED THERE THE AFTERNOON BEFORE TET, JANUARY 21, THE MOST IMPORTANT VIETNAMESE HOLIDAY, WHICH WAS ALSO A VIETNAMESE PAYDAY. IT IS LIKELY THAT MANY VIETNAMESE HAD TAKEN TIME OFF, BUT ACCORDING TO THE SHOP MANAGER. IT IS PREPOSTEROUS TO STATE THAT NOT A VIETNAMESE WAS IN SIGHT.

14. PARAS 20-30-- SHIPLER QUOTES AN AMERICAN CONTRACT EMPLOYEE AS SAYING THE MAINTENANCE SHOP WHERE HE WORKS "WOULD TURN INTO A BIG HONDA REPAIR SHIP" WITHOUT THE AMERICANS. EVEN SHIPLER RECOGNIZES SUCH A STATEMENT TO BE SELF-SERVING AND EXAGGERATED, WHICH IT WAS, BUT IMPLIES THAT AN AMERICAN PRESENCE WILL HAVE TO CONTINUE INDEFINITELY "IF THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE ARE TO HAVE CONTINUED USE OF THEIR COMPLEX WEAPONS. " EXPERT OPINION HOLDS A PRECISELY OPPOSITE VIEW -- THAT WITHIN A VERY SHORT TIME FRAME -- AMERICAN INSTRUCTORS CAN AND WILL BE WHOLLY WITHDRAWN. IT IS HANOI'S PURPOSE TO HAVE THEM WITHDRAWN IMMEDIATELY, BEFORE THE AMERICAN LOGISTICAL TRAINING PROGRAM CAN BRING THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE TO THE SAME STANDARDS OF PROFICIENCY AS THE SOVIET AND CHINESE TRAINING TEAMS, WHICH STARTED YEARS AGO, GAVE TO THEIR PROTEGES IN THE NORTH WITH INFINITELY MORE COMPLEX SYSTEMS, SUCH
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AS SAM MISSILES. IT IS OF COURSE TRUE, AS THE "CESSNA AIRCRAFT" TECHNICIAN IS QUOTED AS SAYING IN DANANG THAT THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE ARE "PEACE MINDED" BUT NOT THE PEACE OF THE GRAVE OR TOTAL DICTATORSHIP WHICH THEY KNOW IS ALL THE OTHER SIDE HAS TO OFFER.

15. PARAS 31-32 -- SHIPLER QUOTES THE PERSONAL OPINIONS OF CONTRACTOR PERSONNEL ON VIETNAMESE ATTITUDES. THIS IS NOT DIFFICULT FOR A REPORTER TO DO WHEN SEARCHING FOR QUOTES TO HELP HIM SLANT AN ARTICLE. IT IS COMPARATIVELY EASY TO FIND AN UNINFORMED AMERICAN WHO WILL OBSERVE THAT THE VIETNAMESE DON'T CARE WHAT KIND OF GOVERNMENT THEY HAVE. CURRENT HISTORY DOES NOT SUPPORT THIS ATTITUDE. THE FACT

REMAINS THAT THE VAST MAJORITY OF SOUTH VIETNAMESE PREFER THE PROTECTION OF THE GVN TO ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL CONDITIONS UNDER THE PRG. THE PRG HAS BEEN SINGULARLY UNSUCCESSFUL IN LURING VIETNAMESE INTO VC AREAS, WHERE ONLY THREE TO FIVE PERCENT OF SOUTH VIETNAM'S CURRENT POPULATION NOW LIVES. ACCORDING TO THE KENNEDY COMMITTEE, 10-MILLION HAVE VOTED WITH THEIR FEET, PREFERRING TO ACCEPT REFUGEE STATUS RATHER THAN LIVE UNDER NVA/VC CONTROL. SHIPLER SEEMS OBLIVIOUS TO THE CONFIRMATION OF THE NONMILITARY LOGISTIC TRAINING MISSION IN WHICH THE AMERICAN CIVILIANS ARE ENGAGED WHEN HE QUOTES A TECHNICIAN AS SAYING "I WOUK FOR MAY COMPANY AND I TRY TO KEEP THE AIRCRAFT FLYING. I'M WORKING ON HELICOPTERS, THAT'S ALL I KNOW." WHEREUPON SHIPLER DRAWS HIM OUT ON THE HIGHER MEANING OF IT ALL AND GETS THE OBVIOUS RESPONSE.

16. PARAS 33-35 -- SHIPLER STATES THAT THE AMERICANS' WORK HAS CARRIED SOME TO POSITIONS OF CONSIDERABLE AUTHORITY IN THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE SUPPLY SYSTEM. USE OF THE TERM "IN" IS QUESTIONABLE; CONTRACTOR PERSONNEL ARE INSTRUCTED TO WORK "WITH" AND NOT "IN" RVNAF UNITS. NO AMERICAN HAS ANY AUTHORITY IN THE RVNAF SYSTEM. IT IS TRUE, BUT OF NO SIGNIFICANCE, THAT THE RVNAF CONTINUE TO USE THE TERM "CO VAN" WHICH IS TRANSLATED AS "ADVISOR". BUT THIS DOES NOT MEAN THAT AMERICANS TO WHOM VIETNAMESE APPLY THE TITLE ARE DOING THE SAME JOBS AS EARLIER AMERICANS WHO WERE CALLED "CO VAN". AFTER NERALLY 20 YEARS OF WORKING ALONGSIDE US MILITARY PERSONNEL, THE VIETNAMESE ARE ACCUSTOMED TO USING THE
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TERM "CO VAN" FOR AMERICANS WITH WHOM THEY WORK CLOSELY. THE VIETNAMESE ARE MAKING THE DECISIONS, HOWEVER, AND NOT THE AMERICANS. SHIPLER QUOTES ADAMS, A CONTRACTOR EMPLOYEE, AS SAYING "WE" WHEN REFERRING TO REORGANIZING THE SHOP AT BIET HOA. SHIPLER CALLS THIS A "REVEALING SLIP OF THE TONGUE." IT IS NATURAL TO BECOME SO IDENTIFIED WITH YOUR JOB THAT YOU SAY "WE" EVEN WHEN REFERRING TO MANAGEMENT DECISIONS OUTSIDE YOUR AUTHORITY. ANY US MISSION EMPLOYEE MIGHT WELL SAY "WE" WHEN SPEAKING OF A DECISION MADE BY THE DEPARTMENT OR THE PENTAGON. SHIPLER QUOTES AN UNNAMED DEFENSE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL AS SAYING "WE VIETNAMIZED THE FIGHTING. BUT WE NEVER VIETNAMIZED LOGISTICS." THAT IS A CORRECT STATEMENT ALTHOUGH THE INFERENCES SUBSEQUENTLY DRAWN BY SHIPLER ARE TOTALLY UNFOUNDED. HE STATES IN PARAGRAPH 38 OF HIS ARTICLE THAT "THERE IS EVIDENCE THE THE CONTACTS OCCASIONLLY CROSS INTO AREAS OF RELATIONSHIP PROHIBITED BY THE PARIS AGREEMENT." -- CONTACTS BETWEEN AMERICAN AND VIETNAMEESE. SHIPLER SAYS THERE IS EVIDENCE BUT PRESENTS NONE OF IT. HE QUOTES TWO PROVISIONS OF THE PARIS AGREEMENT, BOTH OF WHICH HAVEN BEEN AND ARE BEING FULLY OBSERVED.

17. PARAS 36-38 -- SHIPLER'S STATEMENT THAT THE DAO WAS
ORIGINALLY SCHEDULED TO BE DISMANTLED EARLY THIS YEAR IS AN
EXAGGERATION OR POSSIBLY A MISUNDERSTANDING ON HIS PART. WHEN
THE DAO WAS ESTABLISHED, THE US MISSION HOPED THAT THE
CEASE FIRE WOULD BRING TOTAL CESSATION OF HOSTILITIES IN SOUTH VIET-
NAM. HAD THAT HAPPENED, IT WAS GENERALLY FELT THE DAO COULD
COMPLETE MOST OF ITS MISSION WITHIN APPROXIMATELY A YEAR
AND HAVE ITS RESIDUAL FUNCTIONS ABSORBED BY EMBASSY OR
PERFORMED OUTSIDE THE COUNTRY. AT NO TIME WAS THIS A POSITIVE
COMMITMENT, ALTHOUGH SOME EMBASSY OFFICERS MAY HAVE MENTIONED
THE POSSIBILITY TO NEWSMEN IN THE EARLY DAYS OF THE CEASE FIRE.
AS OF JANUARY 1, 1974, THERE WERE 1,015 DOD CIVILIANS IN DAO, A
FACT MADE AVAILABLE TO SHIPLER BY THE EMBASSY. THERE ARE
NOW 907 ACTUALLY IN SOUTH VIETNAM, SLIGHTLY FEWER THAN THE
AUTHORIZED NUMBER OF SLOTS. THE NUMBER OF DAO CONTRACTOR
EMPLOYEES ON JANUARY 31, 1974, WAS 2,762. ON JULY 1, 1973,
THE NUMBER WAS 3,502, WHICH REPRESENTS A DROP OF 740 INSTEAD
OF THE 2,200 REPORTED BY SHIPLER. HE HAS APPARENTLY CON-
FUSED THE JULY FIGURE WITH THE ORIGINAL TOTAL OF DAO CONTRACTOR
PERSONNEL IN MARCH 1973, WHICH WAS 5,237. THE US HAS NO
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MILITARY ADVISORS IN SOUTH VIETNAM; NO ADVICE IS GIVEN THE
VIETNAMESE IN CONTRAVENTION OF THE PARIS AGREEMENTS, CON-
TRARY TO SHIPLER'S UNDOCUMENTED PERSONAL OPINION.

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18. PARA 41 -- THIS PARAGRAPH IS WHOLLY MISLEADING. REGARDLESS OF WHAT UNIDENTIFIED AMERICAN AND VIETNAMESE OFFICIALS AND US CIVILIANS MAY HAVE TOLD SHIPLER, THE DAO DOES NOT PERFUNCTORILY "SEE THAT THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE GET THE EQUIPMENT AND AMMUNITION THEY ASK FOR." IT IS SELF-EVIDENT THAT THE US HAS NOT GIVEN THE GVN CARTE BLANCHE, BUT IF THE POINT NEEDS EXPLANATION, SPECIFICS CAN BE CITED. FOR EXAMPLE, MORE THAN 200 AIRCRAFT TO WHICH SOUTH VIETNAM IS ENTITLED UNDER ONE-FOR-ONE REPLACEMENT PROGRAM HAVE NOT BEEN PROVIDED BY THE US. SINCE MUCH OF THE DEFENSE MATERIAL PROVIDED THE RVNAF COMES FROM US SOURCES, BOTH AS REQUIRED BY LAW AND IN THE ABSENCE OF A SOUTH VIETNAMESE INDUSTRIAL BASE, THE DAO ASSISTS THE VIETNAMESE TO RELATE THEIR NEEDS TO US SUPPLY SOURCES. THIS IS A FAR CRY FROM ADVISING THEM ON WHAT TO ASK FOR, AS SHIPLER GILIBLY SUGGESTS.

19. PARAS 42-47 -- THE CASE OF GERALD KOSH, THE REGIONAL LIAISON OFFICER WHO WAS CAPTURED IN THE PARACELS AND LATER RELEASED BY THE CHINESE, HAS BEEN WRITTEN ABOUT BY SEVERAL JOURNALISTS. HIS DUTIES WERE DESCRIBED BY THE DOD PRESS SPOKESMAN AT THE TIME OF HIS CAPTURE AND EXPLAINED TO SHIPLER BY THE EMBASSY PRESS OFFICER, WHO ALSO TOLD HIM THERE WERE 12 REGIONAL LIAISON OFFICERS IN THE COUNTRY. SHIPLER WAS TOLD THAT AN RLO DOES NOT ACT AS AN ADVISOR, ENGAGE IN COVERT OR CLANDESTINE OPERATIONS OR PARTICIPATE IN COMBAT. SHIPLER
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WAS SKEPTICAL AND INSISTED THAT THERE MUST BE MORE BEHIND THE WORK OF THE RLOS THAN THE USG WAS WILLING TO DISCLOSE. HE WAS ASSURED THERE WAS NOT, THAT AN RLO WAS BASICALLY EMPLOYED TO CONDUCT OVERT LIAISON WITH THE RVNAF AND REPORT ON RVNAF EFFICIENCY AND USE OF MILITARY EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES. THE RLO ONLY COLLECTS AND TRANSMITS INFORMATION HE IS GIVEN BY THE RVNAF, SO IT IS POINTLESS TO SUGGEST THAT HIS "REPORTS END UP IN THE HANDS OF THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE, PERHAPS PROVIDING INDIRECT ADVICE OF ONE SORT OR ANOTHER." IT SHOULD BE NOTED THAT IN SOME CASES, US LAW REQUIRES THAT AUDITS AND END-USE INSPECTIONS BE CONDUCTED BY JOINT US/VIETNAMESE TEAMS. IT IS NOT UNCOMMON FOR AN AMERICAN AND SOUTH VIETNAMESE TO MAKE AN INSPECTION OR AUDITING TOUR OF A MILITARY UNIT TOGETHER. IT IS OFTEN REQUIRED PROCEDURE.

20. PARA 48-49 -- SHIPLER IS WRONG WHEN HE REPORTS THAT AMERICANS ARE STILL STATIONED IN EVERY PROVINCE. THERE ARE FOR CONSULATES GENERAL IN VIETNAM IN ADDITION TO THE EMBASSY IN SAIGON. WHILE THERE ARE SOME VICE CONSUL AND DEVELOPMENT OFFICERS IN THE PROVINCES,

MANY OF THEM COVER TWO OR MORE PROVINCES. ONLY A FEW DAO CIVILIANS AND NO MILITARY PERSONEL ARE STATIONED OUTSIDE THE GREATER SAIGON AREA, ASIDE FROM A FEW US MARINE GUARDS AT THE CONSULATES GENERAL.

21. PARAS 50-51 -- IT IS TRUE THAT SIX AIR FORCE GENERALS VISITED SOUTH VIETNAM LAST FALL; ANOTHER GROUP CAME RECENTLY. THEY CAME AT THE REQUEST OF THE AMERICAN AMBASSADOR WHO WISHED TO BE ASSURED THAT OUR MILITARY MATERIAL AID WAS ADEQUATE, BUT FURGAL; THAT IT WAS APPROPRIATE TO THE SCALE OF ATTACKS BEING MOUNTED BY THE NVA/VC FORCES AT THE DIRECTION OF HANOI; THAT, AS REQUIRED BY LAW, WE SOULD BE ABLE TO REPORT ACCURATELY AND PRECISELY TO THE CONGRESS. THE GENERALS WERE VERY HELPFUL AND THE AMBASSADOR HOPES THEY CAN RETURN AT APPROXIMATELY THE SAME INTERVAL IN THE FUTURE.

22. PARAS 52-56 -- WE WILL NOT SIMPLY SAY SHIPLER'S STATEMENT THAT "ALTHOUGH THE PARIS AGREEMENTS EXPLICITLY RULE OUT ADVISERS TO THE POLICE FORCE THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE NATIONAL POLICE CONTINUE TO RECEIVE REGULAR ADVICE FROM AMERICANS" IS INACCURATE, IT IS UTTERLY FALSE AND KNOWN TO BE SO BY THE UNCLASSIFIED

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WRITER. CERTAINLY, IT IS TRUE THAT CIA OFFICERS CONNECTED WITH THE EMBASSY MEET ROUTINELY WITH POLICE OFFICIALS. IT IS HOPED THAT THIS PRACTICE IS FOLLOWED AT EVERY EMBASSY IN THE WORLD IN A CONTINUING EFFORT TO KEEP SENIOR OFFICIALS OF THE U.S. AS WELL INFORMED AND AS CURRENTLY INFORMED AS POSSIBLE. THAT AMERICANS IN THE PROVINCES MAINTAINING CONTACT WITH LOCAL POLICE OFFICIALS MAY, OUT OF HABIT, STILL BE CALLED "ADVISERS" DOES NOT IN ANY WAY CHANGE THE FACT THAT THERE ARE NO AMERICAN ADVISERS, FORMAL OR INFORMAL, OR UNDER ANY DEVICE OR COVER.

23. PARA 57 -- IT IS CORRECT THAT THE AMBASSADOR ISSUED INSTRUCTIONS TO USAID OFFICIALS IN SAIGON NOT TO DISCUSS THESE MATTERS WITH SHIPLER. HE WORKED ON THE NEW YORK TIMES ARTICLE FOR MORE THAN THREE WEEKS -- IN SAIGON, BIEN HOA AND DANANG. IT BECAME OBVIOUS TO U.S. MISSION OFFICERS FROM SHIPLER'S LINE OF QUESTIONING THAT HE HAD NO INTENTION OF WRITING A REASONABLY BALANCED STORY, BUT RATHER A BIASED INDICTMENT OF THE U.S. ROLE IN VIETNAM AND THE GVN'S UNREASONABLE OBSTRUCTION OF COMMUNIST OBJECTIVES. SHIPLER, THEREFORE, WAS NOT GIVEN THE KIND OF COOPERATION THE EMBASSY NORMALLY EXTENDS TO RESPONSIBLE REPORTERS, SINCE IT IS SIMPLY NOT POSSIBLE TO COOPERATE AND AND THEREBY GIVE A PLATFORM AND INFERRED CREDIBILITY TO DELIBERATE AND GROSS DISTORTIONS CALCULATED TO DECEIVE THE AMERICAN CONGRESS AND THE AMERICAN PEOPLE. DAO CONTRACTORS, INCIDENTALLY, WERE NOT TOLD TO REFUSE TO TALK WITH SHIPLER, AS HE ASSERTS.

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24. PARAS 58-63-- HERE WE BEGIN TO SEE THE LINK FORECAST IN HANOI PLANNING LAST FALL. THE FIGURES GIVEN IN THE KENNEDY REPORT FOR OVERALL ASSISTANCE TO POLICE PROGRAMS MAY WELL BE ACCURATE. WE SIMPLY CANNOT CONFIRM FROM HERE. IT IS IMPORTANT TO RECORD THAT THE PROVISIONS OF THE FOREIGN ASSISTANCE ACT OF LAST DECEMBER ARE BEING SCRUPULOUSLY COMPLIED WITH AND AT A MORE RAPID PACE THAN ACTUALLY CALLED FOR IN THE LAW ITSELF. BUT THE AMERICAN PEOPLE SHOULD BE TOLD WHY HANOI IS SO DETERMINED TO UTILIZE EVERY PRESSURE AT ITS COMMAND TO DESTROY THE POLICE PROGRAM. THE ANSWER IS SIMPLE. NO GUERRILLA SUBVERSION CAN EXIST IN A CLOSED SOCIETY. IT IS NO PROBLEM IN NORTH VIETNAM OR IN THE SOVIET UNION OR THE PRC FOR THAT MATTER. THE GUERRILLA TYPE OF SUBVERSION AND TERROR CAN ONLY EXIST IN A FREE AND OPEN SOCIETY. IN A FREE AND OPEN SOCIETY, EVEN ONE WITH WARTS, AS BOTH OURS AND THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE HAVE, THE MOST EFFECTIVE DETERRENT AGAINST TERROR AND SUBVERSION IS AN EFFECTIVE POLICE FORCE. THEREFORE, EVERY EFFORT IS MADE BY THE COMMUNISTS TO ENLIST ALL PROPAGANDA RESERVES AGAINST IT, INCLUDING THE UNWITTING. CHARGES OF REPRESSION, TERROR, BRUTALITY AND CORRUPTION MUST BE REITERATED OVER AND OVER AGAIN UNTIL IT FINALLY BECOMES IMBEDDED IN THE CONVENTIONAL WISDOM, WE SEE THE CULMINATION OF THIS PROCESS IN SHIPLER'S STATEMENT THAT "THE POLICE HERE HAVE MILITARY FUNCTIONS AND ENGAGE IN INFILTRATION, ARREST, INTERROGATION AND TORTURE OF COMMUNISTS AND POLITICAL DISSIDENTS". THE JUXTAPOSITION SHOULD BE CAREFULLY NOTED. CERTAINLY, THE POLICE ENGAGE IN "INFILTRATION ARREST". HOW ELSE CAN

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ANY FREE SOCIETY ANYWHERE DEFEND ITSELF? THEY ENGAGE IN "INTERROGATION". ANY POLICE SYSTEM ANYWHERE IN THE WORLD DOES THE SAME. AND NOW FOLLOWS INNOCENTLY THE WORD "TORTURE". NO EVIDENCE IS PRESENTED, JUST THE CHARGE. WHO IS INTERROGATED? -- " COMMUNISTS" AND NOW, INNOCENTLY AGAIN, " POLITICAL DISSIDENTS,"WITH NO EVIDENCE PRESENTED. THEN FOLLOWS THE FLAT STATEMENT; "THIS ACTIVITY VIOLATES THE CEASE FIRE AGREEMENT....."IN THE FIRST INSTANCE, THERE IS SIMPLY NO CREDITABLE PROOF OF THE POLICE ACTIONS ALLEGED. NOR IS THERE THE SLIGHTEST REFERENCE BY SHIPLER TO THERE BEING ANY POSSIBILITY THAT THERE HAS BEEN ANY VIOLATION ON THE SO CALLED PRG SIDE.

25. PARAS 64 AND 65-- SHIPLER ACCURATELY RECORDS THAT THE AMBASSADOR AND MAJOR GENERAL MARRAY REFUSED REQUESTS BY THE NEW YORK TIMES FOR INTERVIEWS. THE REASON IS OBVIOUS. TO DO SO WOULD PERMIT THEIR OWN REPUTATIONS FOR INTEGRITY TO BE USED AS A PLATFORM FOR PROMOTING A CAMPAIGN TO GROSSLY DECEIVE THE AMERICAN CONGRESS AND THE AMERICAN PEOPLE. NEITHER WILL PERMIT THIS, ALTHOUGH THEY QUITE FREELY SEE MOST REPUTABLE JOURNALISTS WHO REQUEST INTERVIEWS. AS STATED EARLIER, NO INSTRUCTIONS WERE ISSUED TO CONTRACTORS TO SHUN NEWSMEN WHO APPARENTLY, ON THEIR OWN, ALSO DO NOT WISH TO BE USED IN A CAMPAIGN TO DECEIVE THE AMERICAN PEOPLE. THE COMMENTS ATTRIBUTED TO THE AMBASSADOR, FROM A SECOND HAND SOURCE, ARE ALSO WITHOUT FOUNDATION.

26. PARA 66-- THE USG HAS NEVER MADE A SECRET OF THE FACT THAT IT INTENDS TO REPLACE SOME F-5A JET AIRCRAFT WITH FASTER, MORE MANEUVERABLE F-5ES. IN THE DOD PRESS BRIEFING OF JANUARY 8, 1974, LTGEN JAMES SAID THAT THIS WAS NO NEW INFORMATION. "WE HAVE SAID ALL ALONG," HE TOLD REPORTERS, "THAT WE HAD SUPPLIED THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE WITH THE F-5 TIGER ONE, WHICH WAS THE EARLIEST F-5, AND THAT CONSIDERABLE IMPROVEMENTS HAD BEEN MADE ON SUBSEQUENT MODELS THAT WE HAD CONTRACTED TO PROVIDE THEM, AND THESE OLD AIRCRAFT WOULD BE REPLACED ON A ONE-FOR-ONE BASIS. THIS WILL BE DONE IN TIME...." THE USG DOES NOT REGARD REPLACEMENT OF SOME F-5A AIRCRAFT WITH THE LATER F-5E AS A VIOLATION OF THE PARIS AGREEMENTS. THE F-5E IS SIMPLY A NEWER VERSION OF THE F-5A, WHICH IS NO LONGER AVAILABLE.

27. PARAS 67 AND 68-- SHIPLER STATES THAT A HIGH-RANKING OFFICIAL OF "ONE OF THE NON-COMMUNIST DELEGATIONS, ASKED RECENTLY IF THE THOUGHT THE U.S. WAS FAITHFULLY OBSERVING THE ONE-FOR-ONE RULE".
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REPLIED, "OF COURSE NOT." THE ICCS OFFICIAL WAS QUITE RIGHT,

BUT NOT IN THE WAY SHIPLER IMPLIES. AS A MATTER OF FACT, THE USG
UNFORTUNATELY HAS NOT BEEN ABLE IN ONE SINGLE CATEGORY TO PROVIDE
ONE-FOR-ONE REPLACEMENTS OF ALL THE MATERIAL LOST BY THE GVN
WHILE DEFENDING ITSELF FROM CONTINUING NVA/VC AGGRESSION SINCE
THE CEASE FIRE. ARTICLE VII OF THE PARIS AGREEMENT SPECIFIES
THAT THE TWO SOUTH VIETNAMESE PARTIES SHALL N
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REQUIRED, THE PRG HAS REFUSED TO DO SO. THE PRG, AS A MATTER
OF FACT, HAS TRIED TO PREVENT DEPLOYMENT OF ICCS TEAMS. FOR
EXAMPLE, AN ICCS HELICOPTER TAKING A TEAM IN APRIL 1973 TO
THE ENTRY POINT OF LAO BAO IN PRG TERRITORY WAS SHOT DOWN CLAIMING
THE LIVES OF SEVERAL ICCS MEMBERS AND THE AMERICAN CREW. IT IS
UNJUST FOR SHIPLER TO SAY THAT THE SAIGON SIDE IS UNLIKELY TO
GRANT PERMISSION TO SUPERVISE REPLACEMENT OF WEAPONRY FOR SOUTH
VIETNAM. THE GVN HAS INDICATED ITS WILLINGNESS, TIME AND TIME AGAIN,
TO COOPERATE WITH IMPLEMENTATION OF THE AGREEMENT AND PROTOCOLS
PROVIDED THE OTHER SIDE DISPLAYS A SIMILAR COOPERATIVE ATTITUDE.
THUS, THE ACTIVITIES OF THE POINT OF ENTRY TEAMS HAVE BEEN
FRUSTRATED. AT THE BEGINNING, ON A UNILATERAL BASIS, THE CANADIAN
AND INDONESIAN DELEGATIONS JOINED IN INVOLVING THEMSELVES IN
SUPERVISION AND CONTROL OF MILITARY SHIPMENTS AND THE GVN DID NOT
OBJECT TO THIS. SHIPLER DOES NOT POINT OUT THAT THE ICCS HAS NO
SUPERVISION WHATEVER OF MILITARY SHIPMENTS COMING INTO SOUTH VIETNAM
FROM THE NORTH. NOR DOES HE MENTION ANYWHERE IN HIS ARTICLE THE
INFILTRATION OF COMBAT TROOPS FROM NORTH VIETNAM SINCE THE CEASE
FIRE, A FACT WELL KNOWN TO HIM.

28. PARAS 69-70--THE SHIPLER QUOTATION OF AMBASSADOR DURBROW ENDS
THE ARTICLE CONSISTENTLY ON ANOTHER DISTORTION. ACCORDING TO OTHER
SOURCES, DURBROW WAS MAKING THE POINT THAT NO ONE COULD EXPECT THE
SOUTH VIETNAMESE UNILATERALLY TO OBSERVE THE CEASE FIRE IF THE
OTHER SIDE IGNORES IT COMPLETELY. MOST AMERICANS, WE EXPECT,

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WOULD AGREE.

29. IN SUMMARY, THE SHIPLER ARTICLE WAS OBVIOUSLY NOT WRITTEN TO INFORM NEW YORK TIMES READERS BUT TO GIVE A SLANTED IMPRESSION THAT THE USG AND GVN ARE GROSSLY VIOLATING THE CASE FIRE AGREEMENT AND PREVENTING ANY KIND OF PEACEFUL POLITICAL ACCOMMODATION WITH THE COMMUNISTS THE ARTICLE CONTAINS NUMEROUS INACCURACIES AND HALF-TRUTHS. IT DELIBERATELY OMITTS OR TREATS SKEPTICALLY THE FLAGRANT COMMUNIST VIOLATIONS OF THE PARIS ACCORDS, ALL OF WHICH HAVE BEEN POINTED OUT REPEATEDLY TO SHIPLER AND THE NY TIMES SAIGON BUREAU BY USG AND GVN OFFICIALS.

30. BOTH SECSTATE AND SECDEF MAY RELEASE THIS MESSAGE, OR PORTIONS OF IT, EITHER TO THE CONGRESS OR THE PRESS IF THEY DEEM IT USEFUL TO DO SO. EMBASSY BELIEVES THE SHIPLER STORY AND THIS RESPONSE MIGHT WELL BE MADE AVAILABLE TO THE COLUMBIA GRADUATE SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM AS A CASE STUDY OF PROPAGANDA UNDER THE GUISE OF "INVESTIGATIVE REPORTING" RATHER THAN A RESPONSIBLE JOURNALISTIC EFFORT.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MILITARY ASSISTANCE, PRESS COMMENTS, FOREIGN RELATIONS, TREATY VIOLATION, TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE, INFILTRATION, AMMUNITION, ARMISTICE, MILITARY EQUIP MENT LOANS, COMBAT OPERATIONS, MILITARY LOGISTICS, TRUCE OBSERVERS, FOREIGN POL ICY POSITION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 06 MAR 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974SAIGON02978
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: SAIGON
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740364/aaaachfy.tel
Line Count: 733
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 14
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: STATE 037727, SAIGON 2548
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: martinml
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 11 JUL 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <11 JUL 2002 by elbezefj>; APPROVED <04 DEC 2002 by martinml>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: NEW YORK TIMES ARTICLE ON U.S. ROLE IN VIETNAM
TAGS: MASS, VS, US, NEW YORK TIMES, ICCS
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005